



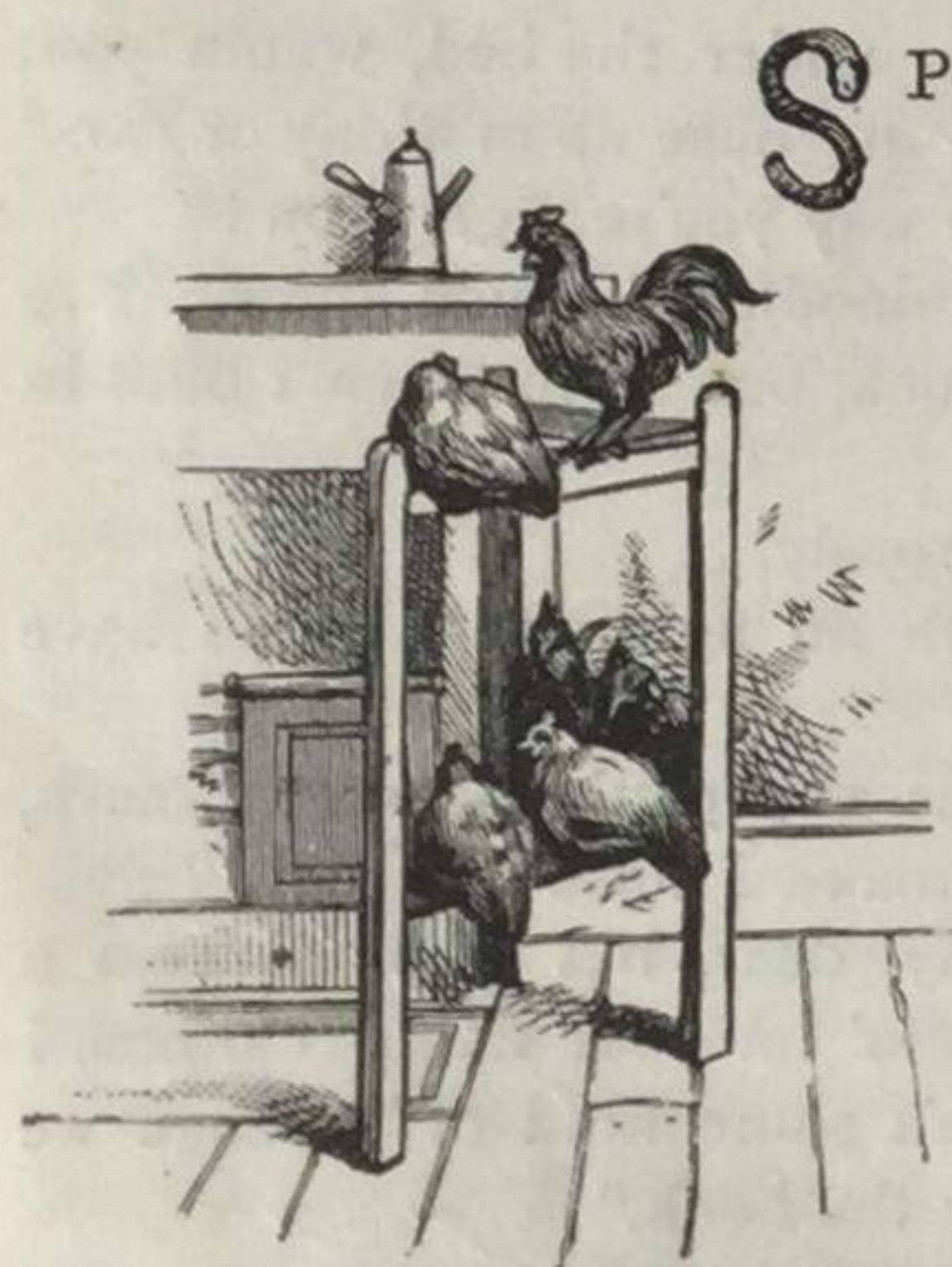
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SPOFFINS;
OR,
TALES FROM TWICKENHAM.

SPOFFINS AND HIS NEIGHBOURS.—No. 2.



SPOFFINS had ten neighbours, the tail-ends of whose gardens abutted on to his own.

There were six on the left, the inhabitants of "Chickweed Villas," as this row of houses was called, three at the end of his garden occupying Nos. 4, 6, and 8, "Sparrowfield Park," and only one on the right, the "semi-detached gentleman," Mr. Crumble.

The neighbours had not yet had much opportunity of judging what sort of person the

new tenant of the "Nasturtiums" was.

Their curiosity, however, was soon satisfied, for Spoffins was not a man to let the grass grow under his feet. As soon as he had the inside of the house in tolerable order, he determined to commence those agricultural operations that he had so long yearned for.

He had heard that everybody in the country had a kitchen garden, and did not see why he should not have one of his own.

He, therefore, selected a portion of the kitchen; and, having boarded it off, amused himself for some hours by filling it with mould from the garden.

He had nothing to carry it in but an old clothes basket, lined with a newspaper, so his progress was not very rapid. But he persevered.

Unfortunately, just as he had reached his twenty-seventh

basketful, which he dumped into the kitchen, with a good handful of mixed seeds in each, Mr. Leasehold, the landlord, happened to call, and insisted upon his putting the earth all back again.

"What do they call it a kitchen-garden for, if it ain't in the kitchen?" asked Spoffins.

"You had better buy a book on gardening, and may be you'll find out that and a few other things," said the landlord, laughing in a way Spoffins didn't like.

"As you know such a lot," said Spoffins, sarcastically, "p'r'aps you can tell me when I ought to gather them vegetables in the garden?"

"Those ain't vegetables, they're weeds," replied the landlord. "You get that book, and then you'll know all about it. But first and foremost you must put all that earth back again!"

"Jane," shouted Spoffins, "pick them seeds out of that mould, and put 'em back in the paper bags, and the mould back in the garden."

The landlord departed with a smile on his face, and Spoffins went out to buy a gardening book.

When he returned with it, Mrs. Spoffins (who had been up to London to see her married sister, Mrs. Swamp) called him into the kitchen and said:—

"Looky 'ere, Sam'el, do you s'pose as that girl 'as nothink better to do than to scrabble seeds out of that there muck-'eap?"

"I've bin at it a good hour," remarked Jane, in a temper, "and only got five seeds and a rhubarb root."

"You wouldn't 'ave 'em wasted, would you, Maria?" replied Spoffins, examining the seeds Jane had raked up. "I've put one of Sutton's ten shillin' packets into that there kitchen garden!"

"Then take 'em out yourself, or let your Sutton fetch 'em, and don't come makin' any such tom-fool mess inside the 'ouse again. You'll be growin' colliflowers in the drawin' room next, I shouldn't wonder."

Spoffins removed the mould, and spread it on the lawn. Eventually various vegetables came up, affording him much amusement in guessing (usually wrong) what they might chance to be, and what would crop up next.

Meanwhile, he read in his book that weeds should be burnt, and as there were plenty he collected a good pile of them, and taking a couple of candles and a jar of dripping from the pantry, he wrapped them up in last week's *Pick Me Up*, which had rather much annoyed him, and which he said was a nasty low paper, and soon had the material for a good bonfire.

He set light to the paper, and as the fire increased dense clouds of smoke filled the gardens and houses of the unfortunate tenants of Chickweed Villas.

In vain did the exasperated six slam down their windows, take in their linen hung out to dry, and swear at Spoffins over their respective fences.

The book said "weeds must be burned," and Spoffins burnt them.

At breakfast the next morning he found in his "new-laid" egg a chicken, the smell of which disgusted him so much that he made up his mind, in future, to lay his own eggs—that is to say, keep fowls to lay them for him.

He was determined not to make any mistake this time, so went out and bought a book on poultry-keeping.

"Fowls are kept in a fowl-house," said the book; and he therefore at once set about getting the things to make one.



It was not long before Mrs. Spoffins was astonished to find a cart-load of planks deposited in the front garden. They were followed by rolls of wire netting, chicken coops, an artificial mother, and a basket of chalk eggs, a few of which Jane inadvertently boiled for breakfast, and over which Spoffins broke his spoon in trying to crack the shell.

He next placed a carpenter's bench in the back garden, and while he was thus busying himself the fowls arrived, four hens and a cock, which he had ordered on the previous day.

The dealer insisted on taking back the basket in which he

had brought the fowls, so Spoffins fearing they would fly away like canaries if left at liberty, shut them up in the kitchen, peeping now and then in at the window to see how they were getting on.



As a matter of fact Mrs. Spoffins' lap-dog, Shrimp, had been hunting them round the kitchen, and was now watching them while they were roosting with a morose and injured air on the clean linen Jane had left on the clothes-horse, until she returned with her mistress from marketing.

Mrs. Spoffins came in the back way and smiled pleasantly at her husband, who was filling his own and his neighbours' gardens with shavings; but when she had been in the house a few minutes she called out—

"Sam'el!"

Spoffins pretended not to hear.

"Sam'el," she repeated in an angry tone.

"Yes, my love," replied Spoffins, running round to her with a plane in each hand and a saw under each arm, to show how busy he was.

"Do you see them things on that there clothes-horse?"

"Them chimmises?"

"No, them birds! Is that the place for birds? If you're a goin' to keep fowls, keep 'em, but you won't do it on my clothes-horse!"

"You wouldn't 'ave me put 'em under the bed, would you, Maria? Don't worry, I shall 'ave the 'ouse up in a day or two."

"'Ave it down, more likely, the way you're a goin' on!"

"I mean the fowl-'ouse, cock-a-doodle villa, you know. I've got all the hinstructions in the book, but Rome wasn't built in a day, nor yet fowl-'ouses."

Just then the cock crowed vigorously.

Mrs. Spoffins jumped back with an agility that would have surprised a professional acrobat.

"Sam'el," she said, as soon as she could get her breath, "does that wretched bird always make a noise like that?"

"It's their way of singin', my dear, but it does seem a little 'oarse. Caught a cold roostin' on your damp clothes, I shouldn't wonder. P'raps there's some kind of lozenge we could give 'em. I'll 'ave a look at the book."

Spoffins did so, but could find no direction about what to do when poultry settled on a clothes-horse, or when a cock crowed bass instead of tenor.

He went back to his work and, sitting on the bench, was reflecting in what part of the garden he should "run up" the house, when the appearance of Mrs. Chilblain's nose between the curtains in her boarder's bed-room showed him that his movements were being watched.

This decided him!

He was not going to be overlooked by an old woman, so he would erect the fowl-house against the palings of No. 2, Chickweed Villas, and cut off her view.

He reared the boards he had nailed together against her palings accordingly.

This caused Mrs. Chilblain to withdraw her nose from between the window curtains and sally forth into the garden, carrying under her arm an empty four-and-a-half-gallon beer-cask, which

she deposited near the fence, and getting on to it, looked over, trembling with excitement:—

"You'll excuse me," she said, "but you surely ain't a goin' to keep fowls?"

"Just a few little 'ens," replied Spoffins politely.

"And a cock, of course!" interrupted Mrs. Spoffins, with a mind-your-own-business sort of glance at Mrs. Chilblain. "We ain't so fond of unprotected females!"

"I'm afraid we must 'ave just one cock! It's usual," remarked Spoffins propitiatingly.

"Well, all I can say," retorted Mrs. Chilblain, "is that I can't abear the noise, an' my boarder can't abear the noise, an' bein' a young man what don't get to bed till late, he don't want to be woke up at four with the crowin' of them 'orrid roosters. It's a cryin' shame, that people must 'ave new-laid heggs for breakfast. 'Owever, you don't go a nailin' nothink on to my fence, Mister, and as to that there 'oarding, what 'ides my view" (the view into Spoffins' pantry), "I'll see the landlord, an'—"

Here the cask slipped away, the palings snapped off in her hand, and she fell back into a cucumber frame.

By the time she regained her position, Spoffins had had time to think of an appropriate reply:

"If I lowers my fowl-'ouse," he commenced directly she reappeared, "I sees your night-dresses, and other garments which I will not enter into, a bein' blowed out by the wind in a manner that ain't scarcely decent. So, marm, as you 'ave so kindly mentioned what you don't like, p'raps you will allow me to mention what I don't like, and what I won't put up with neither!"

Mrs. Chilblain replied with warmth that people must wash, and that her underclothing had as much trimming as anybody's in the villas, and that she would let Spoffins know—

What she would have let him know is uncertain, for at this point the cask capsized again, and Mrs. Chilblain seated herself hastily on some promising young marrows.

She emerged weeping, and went slowly back into the house picking the glass out of her garments in the rear.

As Spoffins solemnly gazed after her, a gust of wind blew over his hoarding. Jane slipped away in time, but Mrs. Spoffins was caught as she turned to run, and flattened out like a turtle on the gravel path.

Spoffins wildly consulted his poultry-book for instructions as to what to do under such circumstances, but in vain.

Ultimately he and Jane raised up one corner of the hoarding, and Mrs. Spoffins crawled out much damaged, and limped indoors.

Spoffins ordered Jane into the house, and then wandered up and down the path, feeling a good deal discouraged. If the neighbours were against him even before they heard the cock crow, what would they be after they had done so. His wife would never forgive him for flattening her, and on all sides the lookout was disheartening.

His broodings, however, were disturbed by a discreet "hem."

Looking over the fence he saw Miss Rapid, the tenant of No. 1, a tall handsome young lady in white, shading her head from the evening sun with a black parasol.

She smiled at him and inclined gracefully, whereupon Spoffins bowed in return.

The lady seemed desirous of speaking to him, so taking a hasty glance at the house to make sure that Mrs. Spoffins was not about, he stepped on to the flower-bed and close to the palings.

"You'll excuse me, sir," said Miss Rapid, "I couldn't help hearing what that disagreeable old woman said to you and your mother just now" (Spoffins smiled affably), "and I wanted to say that I don't mind how high you build your fowl-house, as long as it isn't against *my* fence. For my own part, I adore cocks and hens."

"They seem to be a rummy lot at Chickweed Villas," remarked Spoffins.

"They are," said the young lady feelingly. "I wouldn't stay here myself, but the house is cheap, and suits me. It isn't a mansion, but it is just large enough for my maid and myself. And you, Mr. Spoffins, I understand, are a bachelor?"

"You've 'eard that, eh?"

"Yes," said Miss Rapid, sweetly, "these little things generally leak out somehow. By the way, there is a charming seat here under the apple-tree. Won't you come round and have a look at my garden?"

Spoffins slipped quietly out at the back way, and soon found himself sitting beside his new friend, screened from the view of Mrs. Spoffins by the fence, the apple-tree, and the parasol, telling her all about the fowl-house and his trials generally.

He does not know to this day how it happened; he thinks he must have mixed her up somehow with Mrs. Spoffins, for he found his arm round her waist; and, again mistaking her for Mrs. Spoffins, he was just going to kiss her, when his hair was pulled vigorously from behind, and he was reminded that Miss Rapid was *not* Mrs. Spoffins by finding

the genuine Mrs. Spoffins glaring down at him over the fence.

"You wretch!" said Mrs. Spoffins.

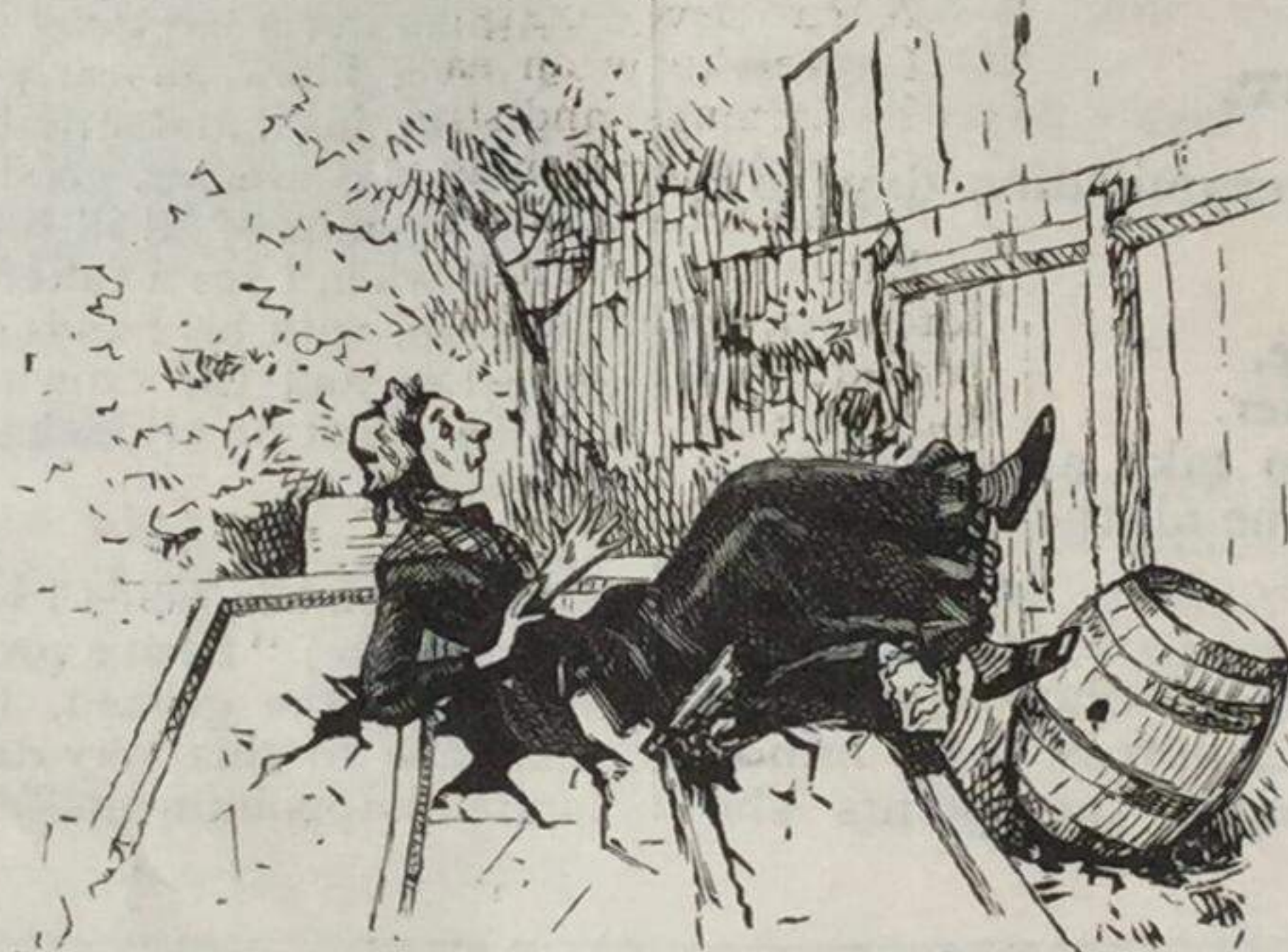
"Who is that vulgar person?" said Miss Rapid.

"I'll let you know, and him too, when I get 'im inside"—but Spoffins had wisely disappeared in the obscurity of the twilight.

Miss Rapid swept indoors, and though Spoffins occasionally (when Mrs. Spoffins is out) ventures to cast a fascinating glance over the fence, it is not reciprocated. She smiles at him no more.

Nor was Spoffins destined to enjoy his "own new-laid" eggs. For after spending a very comfortable night in the kitchen, the fowls woke up at four o'clock, and the cock made such a horrible noise that Mrs. Spoffins rang for Jane, and ordered her to tell the milkman to wring their necks, which was done, Spoffins not daring to remonstrate; for in Mrs. Spoffins' present frame of mind she was quite capable of ordering the milkman to wring his neck into the bargain.

The next fortnight the family lived principally on cold fowl; the birds were a little tough, particularly about the joints, but with the aid of the sugar-nippers and the coal-hammer, Mrs. Spoffins managed to carve them.





Spoffins says he will have no more fowls. Next time he shall try ostriches. They can't be more trouble, and the eggs are larger.

Next Week: TAILORING AT HOME.

HE DID HIS BEST.

"Now Freddie," said his father, "it's examination day, so I hope you'll take a prize."

"I'll try, pa," replied Freddie.

But Freddie returned home without one.

"What! no prize?" exclaimed his father.

"I can't help it, pa. I tried hard to take a prize, but I couldn't. Old Switchem had his eye on me all the time."

A schoolmistress had been telling her scholars about the seasons and their peculiarities; and to impress their minds with the facts, she questioned them upon the points she had given. Several queries had been put, and she finally reached the stupid boy in the corner.

"Well, Johnny," she said, "have you been paying attention?"

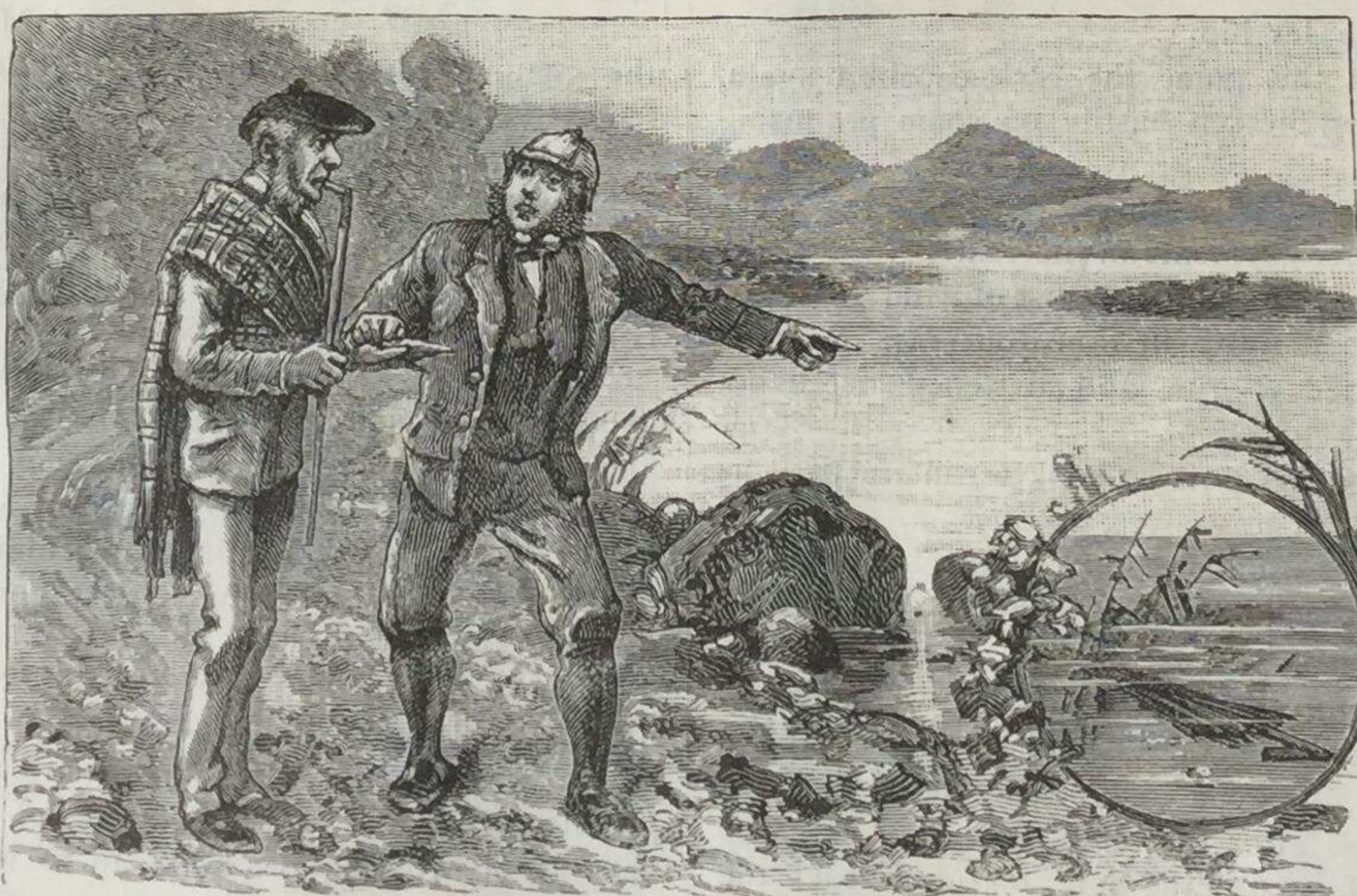
"Yes'm," he answered promptly.

"I'm glad to hear it. Now can you tell me what there is in the spring?"

"Yes'm, I can, but I don't want to."

"Oh yes you do. Don't be afraid. You have heard the other scholars. Be a good boy now, and tell us what there is in the spring."

"Wy - wy - mum, there's a frog, an' a lizard, an' a dead cat in it, but I didn't put 'em there. It was another boy, for I see him do it."



SAD REMINISCENCE.

Tourist.—DEAR, DEAR! THIS PLACE AROUSES PAINFUL MEMORIES. THIS IS THE VERY SPOT WHERE, FIVE YEARS AGO, I LOST MY WIFE AND MY UMBRELLA. A NEW UMBRELLA, TOO, WHICH MADE IT THE MORE PROVOKING.



Distrust the tradesman who would rather give credit than take ready money.

Good breeding on our own part is the best security against other people's bad manners.

In making thy way in the world, remember that a spoonful of oil will go further than a quart of vinegar.

We take greater pains to persuade others that we are happy than in endeavouring to think so ourselves.

GOOD AND BAD LUCK.—There are many men who supposing Providence to have an implacable spite against them, bemoan in the poverty of a wretched old age the misfortune of their lives. Luck for ever runs against them and for others.

One, with a good profession, lost his luck in the river, where he idled away his time in fishing, when he should have been in the office.

Another, with a good trade, perpetually burnt up his luck by his hot temper, which provoked all his employers to leave him. Another, with a lucrative business, lost his luck by an amazing diligence at everything but his business. Another, who steadily followed his trade, as steadily followed his bottle. Another, who was honest and constant to his work, erred by his perpetual misjudgments—he lacked discretion.

Hundreds lose their luck by indorsing, by sanguine speculations, by trusting fraudulent men, and by dishonest gains.

A man never has good luck who has a bad wife.

I never knew an early-rising, hard-working, prudent man, careful of his earnings, and strictly honest, who complained of bad luck.

A good character, good habits, and an iron industry are impregnable to the assaults of all ill-luck that fools ever dreamt of.

But when I see a tatterdemalion creeping out of a grocery in the forenoon, with his hands stuck into his pockets, the brim of his hat turned up and the crown knocked in, I know he has had bad luck, for the worst of all luck is to be a sluggard, a knave, or a tippler.—(Addison.)

"I remember, when I was a little boy" (says Swift in a letter to Lord Bolingbroke) "I felt a great fish at the end of my line, which I drew up almost on the ground, but it dropped in, and the disappointment vexes me to this very day, and, I believe, it was the type of all my future disappointments."

Life is a journey and a pilgrimage; but, if it were only a journey of a single night, travelling first-class would be incomparably more comfortable than travelling third.

"Do you remember, Bridget," writes Charles Lamb, with a tender retrospect to his poverty, "when you and I laughed at the play from the shilling gallery. There are no good plays to laugh at now from the boxes."

The weaver, in too many cases, is but an animated shuttle, the seamstress a living needle, the labourer a spade that eats and sleeps, the lawyer a mere bundle of precedents, the scholar a mere bloated encyclopædia.



THE FESTIVE SEASON.

POLICEMAN.—Now then, you, what are you a doing of?

REVELLER.—It's all right, ole feller, here'sh bootsh (*hic*); you can bring the hot water at 'leven.

A CLEVER EXCUSE.

An Irish soldier placed on guard over a cannon was found by an officer in a public house at some distance.

"How dare you leave your post?" said the officer, sternly.

"It's no consequence at all at all, please yer honour," said the man. "There's no two men, yer honour, would lift that gun, much less carry it off. And if there was more than two, I know I wouldn't be a match for them—so I kem away, yer honour."

What the Plate-basket says to the Burglar—PICK ME UP!

JONES' LEGACY.

"So, Jones," said Robinson, "I hear that your rich uncle is dead. I hope he left you a good round sum of money?"

"Round enough, so far as that goes," replied Jones, with a peculiar smile. "He left me a shilling; but I'd rather he'd squared my bills."

A CANDID OPINION.

An old servant was asked by an artist what she thought of her master's portrait, which he was painting.

She looked at it critically: "Ye might have made him a trifle better looking, may be; but if ye had, ye'd ha' spoilt it."

GUARD.—No smoking allowed, sir.

PASSENGER.—I'm not smoking aloud; I'm just having a cigar on the quiet.

FOR THE SAKE OF THE POOR.

One night Spoffins went to a dinner, where wine was an extra, and Spoffins had an extra share of it. It was a charitable dinner, and Spoffins being a charitable man, ate and drank a good deal more than was good for him.

He was all right till he started homewards, when the air affected him, and he began to reflect how particular Mrs. Spoffins was, and to wish there were no confounded poor to get other people into trouble.

It was evening, but he couldn't find his house. He consulted a policeman, apologizing to him for not having taken a cab; and telling him about a little plan he had of painting his house with luminous paint, so that he could find it without difficulty, when he happened to come home late at night.

The policeman said he thought it was a very good idea, and if Spoffins would also paint himself all over with luminous paint he would keep a look out for him and see him home.

Spoffins was so pleased with the man's civility that he handed him sixpence to drink his health with, and found the next morning that he had given him half a sovereign.

When he got inside, the policeman left, and Spoffins told a friend the next day what had happened.

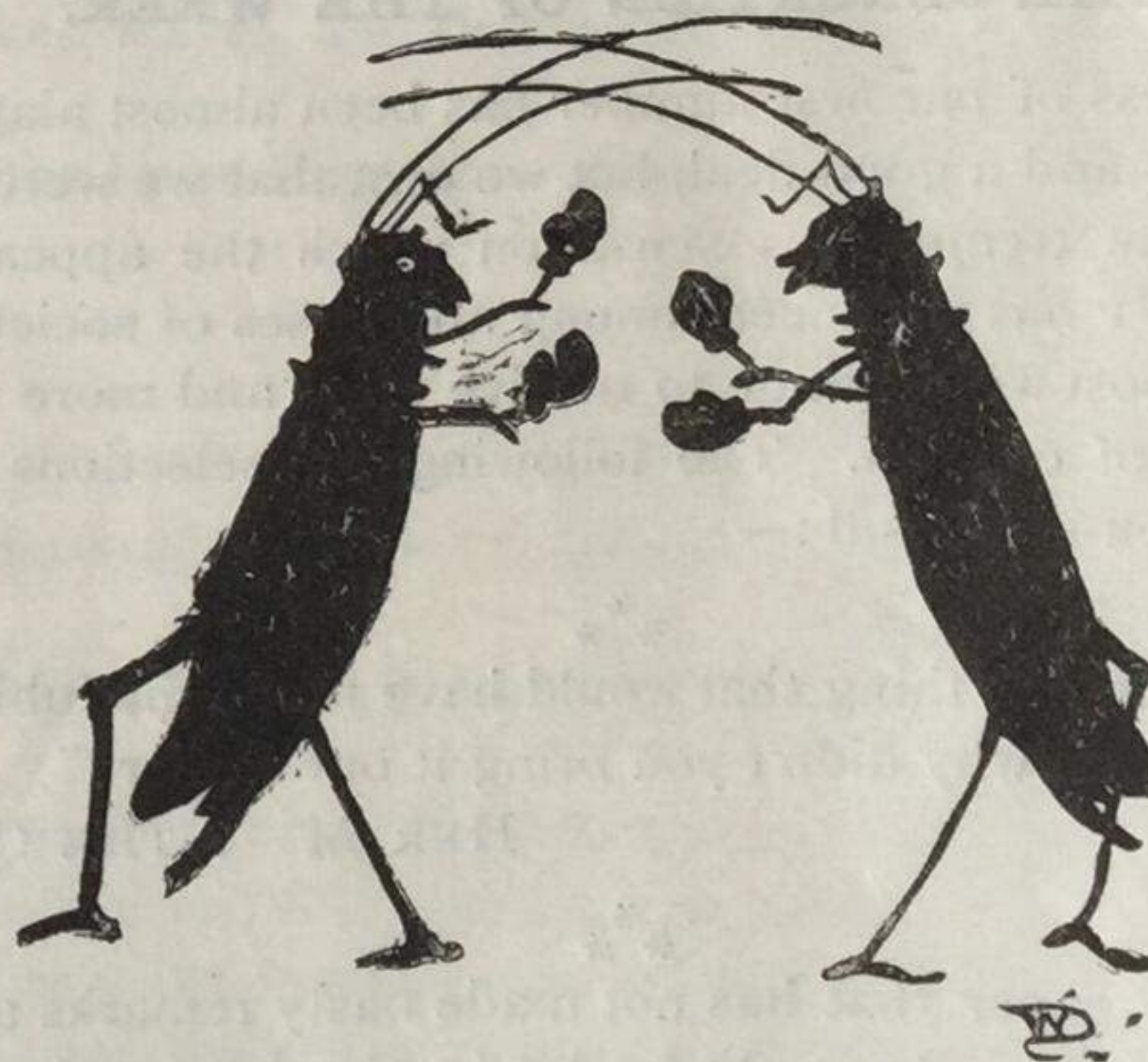
"You know," he said, "Mrs. Spoffins is very pertickler, so I have to be careful. I took off my boots, very heasily and very quietly, then I opened the bedroom door, very heasily and very quietly; then I got inside, very heasily and very quietly; then I took off my coat, very heasily and very quietly; then I took off my waistcoat, very heasily and very quietly; then I took off my never mention'ems, very heasily and very quietly; then I got into bed, very heasily and very quietly, and I was just thinkin' how nicely I had managed it all, when Mrs. Spoffins said:—

"Sam'el, why don't you take off your hat!"

NO FLIRTING.

LADY (to her new servant).—Now, Jane, mind I have no flirting with the baker or milkman.

JANE.—I'm glad to hear it, mum. I never did 'old with mistresses carrying on out o' their proper spear!



A CRICKET-MATCH.

(They only strike when on the box.)

The Worst on Record.

What's the difference between a brewer's dray and a droll fellow falling from an omnibus?—One's a wagg-on, and the others a wag-off.



ENQUIRING CHILD.—But why does he have that stick, Papa?

PAPA.—I don't know; to point with, I suppose.

ENQUIRING CHILD.—I thought it was to poke flies off the images. *(And the poor man had taken such a pride in that stick.)*

THE SENSATION OF THE WEEK.

The success of our first number has been almost alarming.

We can stand a good deal, but we own that we were not prepared for the tremendous sensation which the appearance of PICK ME UP has produced among all classes of society.

By every post we continue to receive more and more flattering expressions of opinion. The following are selections from the first seventeen sacks full:—

... "The one thing that would have made the Jubilee complete. Why, oh why didn't you bring it out earlier?"

HER M—Y THE QU—N.

"The only paper that has not made nasty remarks about me and my umbrella. It ought to be in the knapsack of every British soldier, and, by George, it shall too, if I have to stand the first half dozen copies myself."

H. R. H. THE D—KE OF C—DGE.

"I have again something to live for. I shall send Jokes to PICK ME UP."

THE G. O. M.

"Opens quite a new field for missionary enterprise. If any one would send a few thousand copies of PICK ME UP to the Sandwich Islands, trousers and toothbrushes would be sure to follow."

THE ARCH—P OF C—B—Y.

"I have tried your PICK ME UP and shall take it regularly. Next to rum and milk it is the best thing I know of."

SIR W—LF—D L—WSON.

"Biggar had got hold of a copy, and even the wrongs of Oireland could not make him withhold a smile. He sat upon it, but it was still there."

T—BY'S D—Y.

"We never knew a paper with so much solid matter in it. There was a pound of candles in the copy we saw."

S—Y R—VIEW.

"There are things in it, which would make a cat laugh. Ours laughed till it fell off the garden wall."

SP—T—NG AND DR—TIC NEWS.

"We have never known its equal for curlpapers."

LADY'S P—CT—RIAL.

"We don't know when we have wept more freely than we have done over some of the jokes in PICK ME UP. We shall always keep it on the premises in case of fire."

P—LL M—LL GAZ—TTE.

A PRINTER'S JOKE.

"I'm on the press," he murmured, as he clasped his beloved in his arms. "And this is my first proof of affection!" said he, as he fondly kissed her.

"Here comes par!" she exclaimed, as she glanced over his left shoulder.

"And this is my first impression!" thundered a deep voice, as a boot was applied to the seat of his Sunday trousers.

HE WISHED HE HADN'T SPOKEN.

PRECOCIOUS YOUTH (*smoking furiously*).—This is a smoking carriage, ma'am.

DETERMINED-LOOKING FEMALE.—I know that, young gentleman, and I know exactly what you're smoking. It's a penny Pickwick. But you needn't put it out on my account. I keep a cigar-shop.

HOW TO KEEP A SECRET.—Tell one woman!

HE WOULD DO IT.



'Twas in the skating season,
Poor Brown's unlucky fate,
Led him, in spite of warning,
To try the figure eight.



"HIDDEN."

It had a thousand charms for me,
That tree.
And when deep in its rugged coat
I wrote
With steel a name I copied from my heart;
'Twas then I seemed to lift my load of joy,
And leave within the spot I loved, a part.
As oft a child to mother's knee a toy
Takes, leaves, and then comes back and back
To peep
At the loved thing thus given to well-loved hands
To keep.

Moss-hidden name! I miss you there!
The air
Of many winters brought the lichen green
Unseen;
To hide the wounds made in my former years.
And bid me, if it could but so prevail,
To stay the blinding torrent of my tears,
To treat dead love as but an oft-told tale!
Grave-hidden face! Moss-covered name!
Ah me!
Still live ye in my heart, albeit
Ye buried be!

NOTICE.—A prize of ONE GUINEA will be given every month for the best original serious poem. Any contribution not gaining the prize but considered good enough to be used, will be paid for. Close of competition, November 10th, 1888.

AN UNLUCKY KISS.



ONCE kissed a girl!

It does not seem a very tragic thing to do, but its effects were more than tragic, they spoiled my prospects, and indirectly influenced my whole life.

Other fellows kiss girls, and nothing particular happens; but I kissed the wrong girl, and that makes all the difference.

She was the daughter of a Dr. Mavers, living at a little town in the North of England. He had a large practice, and I was living with him as assist-

ant, with a view to partnership in the future.

I had only been at Newbury three or four months, but it was long enough to lose my heart. I had fallen desperately in love, and unfortunately with a girl whom I only knew by sight, and saw no immediate prospect of knowing any better.

She was the daughter of a retired officer, of a rather haughty and exclusive disposition, and I never met either father or daughter at any of the houses at which I visited. My passion therefore seemed to have but little chance of being returned, though I cherished it none the less on that account.

I first saw her at church, her beautiful blue eyes gazing with pious rapture (as it seemed to me) at the stained glass window, and a ray of light falling upon her golden hair.

I always try to think of her as I saw her then, and endeavour to forget (if I could) that I have seen those same heaven-lit eyes rest upon me with a very different expression.

One unlucky day towards the end of summer, Dr. and Mrs. Mavers left home to spend a week at Brighton, leaving me to attend to the practice, whilst an old aunt of the doctor's looked after the household.

The day they left was Nellie Mavers' birthday, and she had invited several of her school-fellows to have tea with her. They were all lively girls, their ages ranging from thirteen to sixteen. Nellie herself was seventeen, but young for her age, and I looked upon her quite as a child.

We had been playing croquet all the afternoon, and after tea the old aunt went indoors for a nap.

In an evil moment I proposed a game of forfeits, which went very well for some time, until it came to my turn to propose a forfeit for Nellie.

I cannot tell what possessed me, I think I must have lost my head, for I impulsively said, "This shall be your forfeit," and I bent over her and kissed her upturned face.

She snatched her head away and glared at me for a second, her laughing eyes now cold and stern with anger, saying, "I think we'll consider that game finished!"

"I beg your pardon, Nellie," I cried, "I did not mean any harm, but you were really looking so awfully pretty!"

But this only added fuel to the flames.

"The apology is as gentlemanly as the offence," she said, and turned her back upon me.

"As I have had the misfortune to offend you so deeply," I said, "I had better relieve you of my presence," and thereupon retired with as much dignity as I could muster, though feeling, it must be confessed, extremely small.

I went indoors, thinking I had better be beforehand with Nellie in confessing my sin to her aunt, but that respected dame was still indulging in her siesta, and was not visible; so I retired to the surgery wondering how I could have made such an idiot of myself, and what the doctor would say to my indiscretion.

I had not been there many minutes when in came one of the

young visitors, looking rather shy and nervous. I offered her a chair and asked her, with a poor attempt at facetiousness, if she would like to have a tooth drawn. She ignored my feeble joke, and said—

"I have only come from Nellie to say that she didn't wish you to go away, and that she will forgive you this once, if you will come back and promise not to do it again."

I was only too glad to escape so easily, for I had not the least desire to do it again. I therefore readily gave the required promise, and returned to the party, who were still playing forfeits.

I thought at first Nellie looked still a little ruffled, but she soon became as lively as ever.

Presently it came to my turn to pay forfeit.

I endeavoured to look as cheerful as possible, feeling pretty sure that I should be made to look a fool in return for my little escapade, but determined to put a good face on the matter.

The girls consulted together a few moments and then informed me that I was to act the part of a donkey.

I smiled ruefully, feeling that I had already done so, but I found that I was expected to trot round the garden on hands and knees.

They carried out the idea in proper style, tying a hoop round my neck by way of bridle, and hitting me (not very gently) with a stick.

I endured my discomforts patiently, my guilty conscience telling me I deserved them; till suddenly, just as we reached a muddy little pond at the bottom of the garden, they gave me a sharp push, and in a moment I was floundering in the pond, half smothered with mud and water.



By the time I had got to my feet again, and wiped the mud out of my eyes, they were all at a safe distance laughing at me, and Nellie cried—

"Next time, perhaps, you will think a little before kissing ladies without leave, Mr. Billicombe."

It struck me that I should think a very long time indeed, if that was to be the usual result. I was completely covered with black mud and green duck-weed, my hair dripping and making brown streaks over my forehead and down my face.

I thought I had attained the height of misery, but there was worse to come. I had no sooner got back to the surgery, and squeezed the worst of the mud out of my clothes, when to my unutterable horror and disgust the bell rang.

What should I do? The servants were out, the old aunt asleep, and there was literally no one to answer the door but myself.

Whilst I was cogitating the bell rang again, a louder and more urgent peal.

With the courage of desperation I marched to the door and flung it open. Whom should I behold on the threshold but the object of my secret hopes, the beautiful Miss Danvers.



She looked at me with amazement, amusement and disgust struggling for the mastery in her lovely eyes. I wished I could sink into the earth, but wishes were of no avail.

"Is Mr. Billicombe at home?"

"I am Mr. Billicombe, unfortunately," said I.

"Oh!" said she, looking perplexed and nervous, "it does not matter. I will wait until Dr. Mavers comes home," and with a stiff bow she walked away in the direction of the rival doctors, leaving me speechless on the doorstep.

Doubtless she thought me drunk or demented, but what could I do? To confess the truth, even if she would have listened to an explanation, would only make me more completely an object of ridicule.

I was in a state bordering on distraction.

Worse still, during those miserable moments when I read disgust and scorn in Miss Danvers' clear blue eyes, I had seen, evidently waiting for her, a little way off the most gossiping old maid in the parish. One glance at her open mouth and distended eyes was enough to tell me that she had noticed my plight, and my disgrace would not be long in becoming public property; and so I found it, for wherever I went, averted faces, smothered laughter or stiff bows were the best greeting I could obtain. To cut my story short, I very soon discovered that the place was too hot for me.

No doubt I might have lived the scandal down, and should have endeavoured to do so, but Dr. Mavers did not give me the opportunity. He had very lofty notions as to the dignity of the profession, and when he returned and discovered the figure I had cut in his absence, he said he feared I was a little too lively for his class of practice, and it would be better for all parties if we separated.

Worse than all, Dr. Mavers took a new assistant in my place, and the latest intelligence from Newbury is that he is engaged to Miss Danvers.

A camp meeting preacher usually after his sermon asked his negro attendant how it went off? One day Pompey was very enthusiastic:—

"You was mighty fine to-day, boss, mighty fine; you done look just like a lion, when you was preaching, just like a lion."

"A lion, Pompey? You never saw a lion."

"Yes, I did, boss. Farmer Johnson's lion dat draws his punkins to market."

"That's not a lion, Pompey, that's an ass!"

"Anyhow, that's him, boss; you look just like dat."



[PRIZE COMPETITION.—Four Prizes of five shillings each will be given every month for the four best "Pilferings." The sender must state the source from which the contributions are taken. Close of the first competition, November 5th, 1888. The editor reserves the right of using unsuccessful contributions.]

IT WASN'T NEEDED.—A country surgeon, who was very bald, was on a visit to a friend's house, observed that the servant wore a wig, and began to chaff him, finally remarking—

"Look at me, I don't wear a wig, though I've still less hair than you."

The servant looked at him as requested, and replied:

"An empty barn don't need no thatch, sir!"

FEATHERLY—I say, Bobby, did your sister Clara seem pleased when she learned that I intended to call last night?

BOBBY—"I didn't notice."

FEATHERLY—"Didn't you hear her say anything? Here's sixpence for you."

BOBBY—"Let me see? Yes, I heard her tell ma she musn't forget to set the clock half an hour fast."

TIN-TACKS.—A wag, sauntering quietly along the street, was accosted by a man who stammered,

"Can you t-t-tell me where I c-c-can g-g-get some g-g-good t-t-tin-tacks?"

"Certainly," replied the wag. "You turn down that street on your left, then turn again to your left, and take the second street to the left again. That will bring you to the best hardware shop in the town, where you'll be sure to find them."

The stammerer continued his way.

The wag, turning back, walked down the street, entered the afore-said hardware shop, and proceeded as follows:—

"Have you any g-g-good t-t-tin t-t-t-t-tacks?"

"Yes, sir," said the obliging shopman, producing them.

"Are you sure th-th-these are g-g-good ones?"

"Yes, sir, the best that are made."

"Have they g-g-got s-s-sharp p-p-p-points?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Then s-s-s-sit on them t-t-t-till I come back again," he said, making a bolt for the door.

Presently the unlucky stammerer, having described three sides of a square, arrived at the hardware shop, and entering asked innocently—

"Have you any g-g-g-good t-t-t-t-tin t-t-t-t-tacks?"

When he recovered he wanted to know whether the house had fallen on him, or if it was simply an explosion.

STRANGER (to Omaha Citizen): "Those three corner lots of yours are fine property, captain."

CITIZEN (enthusiastically). "Fine property? Why, great Scott, man, there ain't nothing like 'em west of the Missouri river! Two years from now they'll be in the heart of the city, an' people will fairly howl for 'em. They ought to come under the head of jewellery, not real estate. If you want to buy that property, stranger, you've got to buy it by the inch!"

STRANGER.—"I'm not buying property this morning, I'm the new tax assessor!"

CITIZEN: "O-h-h-h-h!"

WORTH KNOWING.

[For the four most amusing or most instructive items "worth knowing" four Prizes of five shillings each will be given every month. The Contribution should be written on a Post Card and reach the PICK ME UP Offices not later than October 31st, 1888. The Editor reserves the right of using unsuccessful contributions.]



NEWSPAPERS were first invented by a French physician, who, finding his visits more welcome when he brought any news or gossip, applied to Cardinal Richelieu for a patent to publish the *Gazette de France* in 1631. The first English newspaper was the *Public Intelligencer*, established in 1663. The latest and most promising Journal is PICK ME UP.

An English Lady has introduced sewing into boys' schools. She knows what the man who marries the modern girl will need to be proficient in.

Steel pens are said to have been known as far back as 1685, but first came into general use in 1820. The wholesale price of the first gross sold was £7 4s. In 1832 the price had come down to 6s. a gross. At the present day a better article may be had for sixpence. Spoffins says, even if he could get them for nothing, he would continue to patronise geese and stick to quills.

It may not be generally known, that PICK ME UP spelt backwards makes PU EM KCIP, and by a slight alteration of the letters we get KC PIEU PM. And yet the price is only one penny.

Spoffins' friend, Professor Pimple, has invented yellow spectacles for making lard equal to butter. He says, if you wear his spectacles and get somebody to hold your nose, you can't tell the difference. We haven't tried it.

TO CLEAN BRASS.—Rub with a strong solution of salts of lemon in water. When clean, polish with a dry leather, and finely powdered tripoli or rotten-stone.

The first public building was the Ark; hence, says Spoffins, the technical term Architecture.

Owing to our going to press a week beforehand we cannot give a description of the first PICK ME UP ENTERTAINMENT until our next issue.

GOOD NEWS FOR HUSBANDS.—An eminent medical authority says, that hair pulled off will grow again.

HOW TO MAKE A VENETIAN BLIND.—Hit him in the eye!

There is no fact more clearly established in the physiology of man than this, that the brain expends its energies and itself during the hours of wakefulness, and that these are recuperated during sleep. If the recuperation does not equal the expenditure, the brain withers—this is insanity. Thus it is that in early English history, persons who were condemned to death by being prevented from sleeping, always died raving maniacs; thus it is also, that those who are starved to death become insane—the brain is not nourished, and they cannot sleep.

The practical inferences are these:—

1st. Those who think most, who do most brain work, require most sleep.

2nd. That time "saved" from necessary sleep is infallibly destructive to mind, body and estate.

3rd. Give yourself, your children, your servants, give all that are under you, the fullest amount of sleep, that they will take, by compelling them to go to bed at some regular, early hour, and to rise in the morning the moment they awake; and within a fortnight, nature,

with almost the regularity of the rising sun, will unloose the bonds of sleep the moment enough repose has been secured for the wants of the system.—FORBES WINSLOW.

TO CLEAN MARBLE.—Take 4 ozs. of soft soap, 4 ozs. powdered whiteing and 1 oz. of sugar. Mix with hot water to the consistence of cream. Apply while still hot, leave for not less than two hours, then wash off and rub dry with a piece of chamois leather.

A French *savant* says, that the nose is gradually losing its power to discharge its traditional functions in the case of the civilized peoples. When the sense of smell vanishes altogether, as will certainly be the case one day, the organ itself will follow its example sooner or later. Nature never conserves useless organs, so the nose must go. The sense of smell is far keener in the savage than in the civilized man.

A man who gives his children habits of industry, provides for them better than by giving them a fortune.

The best turbot are caught on the Dutch coast. Of these, about 100,000 find their way to Billingsgate every year, and fetch high prices. Turbot is also caught on the coast of Scotland, but this is scarcely so good as the Dutch fish. The season lasts from March to September.

A young gentleman one evening, after a dance, made a bet that he could swallow a raw egg without breaking the shell, and he did so. A few days afterwards he experienced violent pains, the doctor administered a strong emetic, the egg came back but broken, and out sprang a young chicken. The warmth of the young man's stomach had produced the unexpected result. If any one doubts the truth of the story he can try it for himself.

THE FOUR GREAT RELICS at Aix-la-Chapelle, which are only exhibited once in seven years, have recently been on view, the present year completing the cycle. They consist of the Robe of the Virgin, the swaddling clothes of the Infant Christ, the clothes in which the body of John the Baptist was wrapt, and the loin clothes worn by the Saviour on the Cross.

In addition to the above, there are sundry minor relics, which may be seen at any time on payment of a consideration. These latter include (beside the bones and hunting horn of Charlemagne) a locket of the Virgin's hair, a fragment of the True Cross, one of the nails, and a piece of sponge which was filled with vinegar, the leather girdle of Christ, the arm of St. Simeon, some of the manna from the wilderness, and some fragments of Aaron's rod.



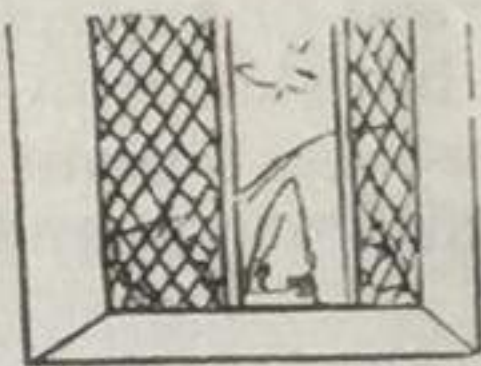
SMITH.—I say, Brown, why do you wear such a shocking bad hat?

BROWN.—Strategy, my boy! Strategy! My wife declares she won't go out with me till I get a new one.



1.

Edwin will send a message to his fair,
He giveth it to carrier dove to bear.
(This was of yore, when telegrams were not.) [spot
He prayeth her to answer on the
If she will wed him.



2.

Mark well the joy of Edwin's ladye love:
She writeth "yes," and giveth to the dove
To bear it back again.



3.

Alas, ye bird doth drop ye billet-doux
Just at ye feet of Edwin's dearest foe.
"All's fair in love and war!"



4.

Ye fair fond dove doth meet with dire disaster, [master.
At hands of sad and disappointed Pigeon doth pie become.



5.

But retribution cometh all too soon.
Fell indigestion marks him for her own.
Behold ye gallant lover!



6.

Meanwhile ye joyous rival maketh way,
And gains ye graces of ye damsel gay.—
So much for faith of maiden!

HE DID IT.

He was a sentimental poet and he had written odes to nearly everything, but when his Editor told him to write something fetching about *Buddles' Worm Powders*, he rebelled.

"I don't see why you should object," said the Editor. "You needn't take the powders, and the worms won't read your poem; the rest of the public must look out for themselves. For my part I would rather read the poem than take the powders, and —"

"You would?" interrupted the Poet with tears of joy and pride; "say no more, I'll do it!"

And he did, but the Editor wasn't sure afterwards that the powders mightn't have been easier to take.

What is that which is shut when it is open, and open when it is shut?—A railway gate on a level crossing.

EQUAL TO THE EMERGENCY.

An unappreciated tragedian having announced that he would play "Hamlet" for his benefit, and having all the costume but the tights, borrowed ten shillings to get a pair.

Meeting a friend, he stood him some drinks, saying to himself, "I can get a cotton pair for eight shillings."

Then meeting another friend, he stood more drinks, condoning his liberality by the reflection that he could hire a much better pair for still less money. Again and again the same thing happened, and before night the whole of the intended tights had been swallowed by the actor's friends.

When the overture commenced, he was found in the scene-painter's room, painting his legs black. "They won't know the difference," he said, and he was quite right. The critic declared he had never seen such a splendid fit in his life.

THE COUNTRYMAN IN TOWN.

ONE afternoon last week, a North countryman, after having wandered through the various sections of the British Museum, presented himself at the Egyptian Room exactly as the clock struck five.

On demanding admission he was informed that it was closing time, and that he could on no account be admitted that day.

At first he angrily declared how he had come all the way from Yorkshire at a very early hour that morning, and he was not going back again without having seen the mummies. This being ineffectual, he suffered his impetuosity to cool down a little, and begged, as a very great favour, to be allowed a sight of the mummies, urging that it would not take up more than two or three minutes, after which he would be quite satisfied.

At this moment the keeper of the Egyptian section of the British Museum appeared upon the scene, and being introduced by the attendants (who were anxious to get away), to the stranger, the latter lost no time in pressing his request upon him, adding that he was compelled to return to Yorkshire by the eight o'clock train from King's Cross.

The keeper who possessed a keen perception of humour, and rightly guessed, that the countryman had not the remotest idea of what a mummy really was, assumed a grave air and observed:—

"Really, sir, I should be most happy to break through the rules for once in order to let you see the mummies, but just now we are rather upset, and I am sure you won't wish to intrude upon the sanctity of the occasion, when I tell you that our chief mummy is lying dead!"

"Oh, if that's the case, of course I won't intrude," returned the stranger, sympathetically, as he walked away.

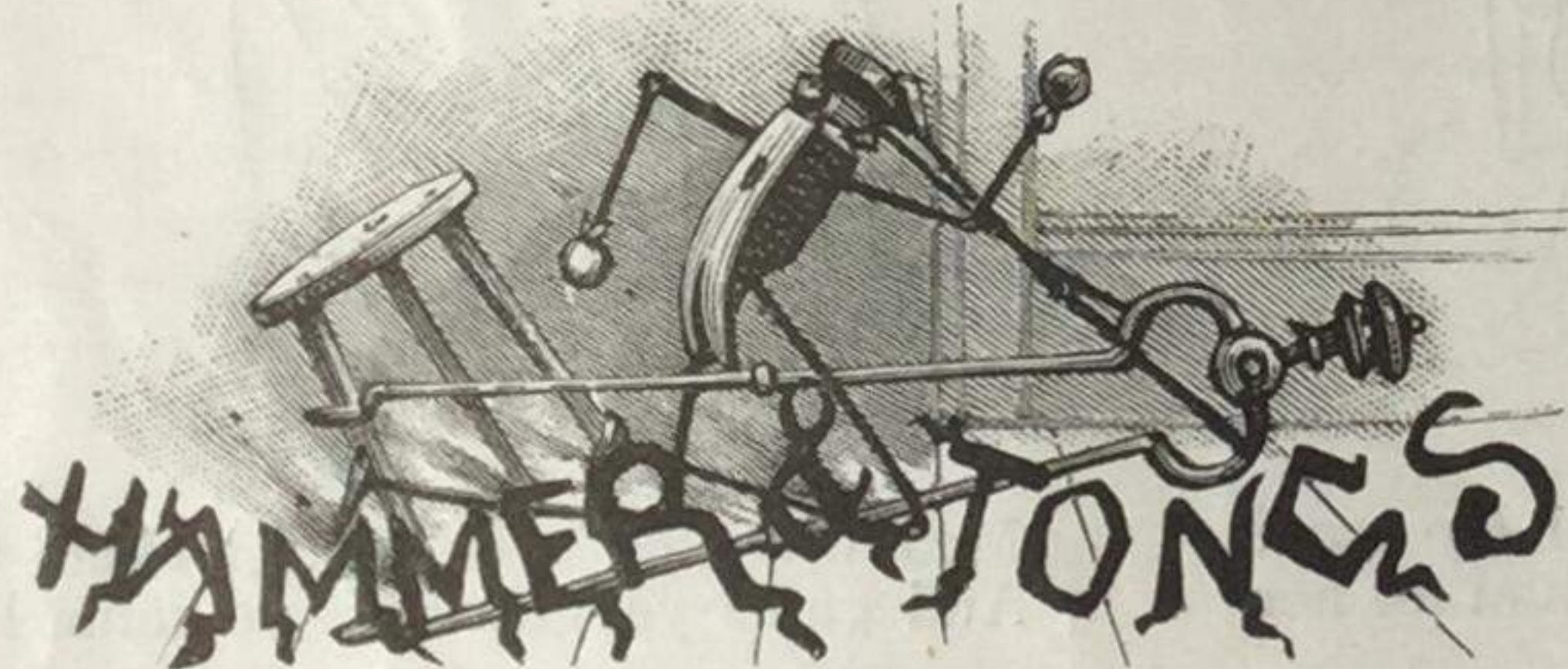
"Pray make my respects to the family."

But his message has never been delivered.

AT THE SHOW.

"I say, mister," said one of the audience after seeing the "Fat Lady," "she isn't half so fat as you've got her in the picture outside the show."

"No, sir, she ain't," admitted the showman; "and if I could get hold of the hartist who painted that there pictur, I'd have 'im up for libel!"



CLARA (*six months past her honeymoon*) asks us:

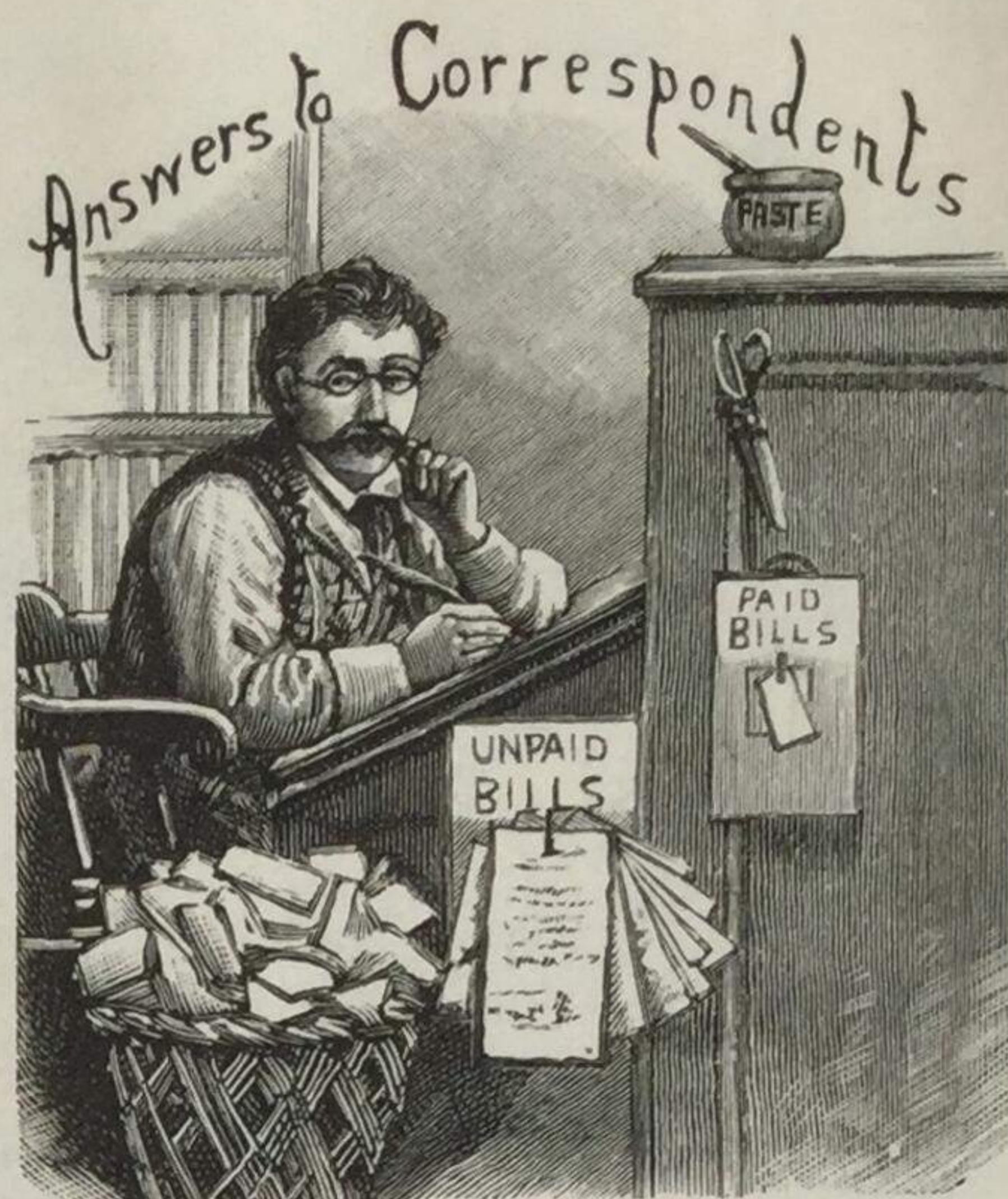
"WHETHER, IN OUR OPINION, A MARRIED MAN OUGHT TO BE ALLOWED A LATCH-KEY."

We feel that the public ought to have a voice in so important a matter. We propose, therefore, to open a column, under the above heading, for the discussion of this and other disputed questions, and we beg the co-operation of our readers to keep it lively. Any form of argument, short of bad language or throwing stones, will be admissible.

PRIZE COMPETITION.

For the four best replies, written on postcards, four prizes of five shillings each will be given. Close of the first Competition, Saturday, October 20, 1888. The Editor reserves the right of using unsuccessful contributions.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS.—We cannot hold ourselves responsible for the safety of rejected contributions, but every effort will be made to return them if accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope. All letters to be addressed to the Editor of PICK ME UP, 11, Southampton Street, Strand, W.C.



AMATEUR.—No, sketches on brick walls and sides of houses cannot be admitted. Sketches drawn on the backs of bank notes will not be returned.

FARMER.—When the dog has a fit, thrust a spoonful of common salt into his mouth, and it will give almost instantaneous relief. The same remedy will often cure a hysterical or epileptic fit. The patient will swear a little when he comes to, but that is of no consequence.

BOB.—If you want a couple of pear-trees—plant a pair!

YOUNG STUDENT.—Oliver Goldsmith was born in Ireland. He died in bed.

JOURNALIST.—Thanks for your offer. We have already enough Spoffins sketches to last us for more than one year. Send humorous stories, or other suitable matter.

MARY JANE.—We never heard of a dress improver that would whistle "Rule Britannia." You must be thinking of the Jubilee bustle, which played "God Save the Queen" whenever the proprietor sat down. We believe it was suppressed in deference to the feelings of the Irish members.

HOUSE-KEEPER.—To get rid of black beetles, spread thin bread and treacle all over the kitchen floor. Wait about an hour; then come down in the dark, and run lightly over with a garden-roller. If you haven't a garden roller you can use a bicycle, but it will take longer.

IDEALIST.—You are quite right; you can do nothing without money. You cannot come into the world without paying somebody for your introduction. You cannot live comfortably in the world without money, and when you have said your last "good-bye" to the world, the undertaker won't even put you into the ground without being paid for it.

LADY B.—You have been misinformed. H.R.H. never suggested the idea.

MEASLES.—No, thank you, we don't want any!

A PERPLEXED PARENT wants to know what to do with our girls.—Marry them!

PATIENT PETER.—You say you have buttered the stairs, put tartar emetic in the gin-bottle, and engaged the waits to play under your window every night, and yet your mother-in-law will not leave you.—Try setting the house on fire.

A SPLENDID CHRISTMAS PRESENT.—A complete set of the celebrated "Steamship Game" (sold at 5s.) will be given until further notice, gratis, to every subscriber of PICK ME UP, on receipt of the Annual Subscription of Six shillings and Six-pence (inclusive of postage).

N.B.—The Game is on view at the PICK ME UP Offices.

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